

Bundy Feels Some CIA Tasks 'Needed'

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WASHINGTON (UPI) — Some CIA covert operations have cost more than they were worth, but certain ones may be needed to check international terrorism and avoid nuclear danger, McGeorge Bundy, former special aide to President Lyndon Johnson, said yesterday.

Bundy, now head of the Ford Foundation, also told the House Select Committee on Intelligence that the agency's covert branch might be improved by reducing its size.

"THE GENERAL record of the last 20 years suggest that only too often the covert activities of the U. S. government have cost us more than they were worth," Bundy said. He did not specify which ones he meant.

Bundy, one of the architects of U.S. policy in the Vietnam War, warned against eliminating all covert activities. "It is at least worth consideration whether there may not be need for some highly secret activity in emerging fields like those of international terrorism and nuclear danger," Bundy said.

He said past CIA activities in assassination plotting were "inexcusable and unauthorized actions." He said the agency's covert branch probably would be improved if it were sharply reduced in size.

"I THINK a CIA with a much smaller and leaner covert intelligence capability could easily have greater specific effectiveness ... than the very large and overstaffed enterprise developed in the last generation," Bundy said.

He said such operations as the U2 flights over the Soviet Union and Cuba, although "in direct opposition to international law," were justified because they were critically important for intelligence collection.

"THE STRATEGIC arms race of the 1950s and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 would have been enormously more dangerous without covert intelligence overflights," Bundy said.

Nicholas Katzenbach, former undersecretary of state and Justice Department official in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, said "abandoning secret activities abroad would help to restore public confidence in government in this country."

Katzenbach also said that "the public revelation of past CIA activities, while essential to restoring confidence in government in this country, has done much to destroy the CIA's capacity successfully to conduct covert activities abroad."